2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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121 as myths that sanction or reflect contemporary social relationships and usages.[1]

In short, my chief aim has been to give a descriptive analysis of Tale social structure; but I hope that the material will also be useful for comparative and theoretical studies.

II

114 My wife and I spent nearly two and a half years in the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast, between January 1934 and April 1937. For most of that time we were amongst the Tallensi.[2] Our head-quarters were at Tongo, which proved to be an ideal base for our work. There we were at the hub of Taleland and within a few hours' march or ride of any part of the country we might wish to visit. We trekked over most of Taleland and also visited the chief centres of the neighbouring tribes, in particular the Mamprusi. As there is no linguistic literature for the Tallensi, we had to learn their dialect from scratch, with the assistance of a semi-literate interpreter and the scanty literature on Mole and Dagbane. It took us about six months to learn enough Talni for workaday communication with the people. By the end of our first tour we became proficient enough to dispense with an interpreter. Nevertheless, I know only too well that we reached but a moderate standard in our vocabulary and in our appreciation of the finer shades of thought and feeling that can be expressed in Talni.

We were the only white people who had ever lived among the Tallensi for any length of time and the first to speak their dialect. After their initial suspicions had been allayed, we were quickly accepted and soon had many friends. Our first informants soon got to understand our aims and entered into the spirit of our work with sincerity and zeal. They were mostly men and women who assisted us out of friendship and trust in our good faith. I wish to thank them for their confidence in us and for the devotion with which they instructed us in the way of life of their people. We remember with gratitude the patience, tolerance, tact, and friendliness of many dozens of Tale men, women, and children. They welcomed us to their homes, their domestic occasions, and their esoteric and public religious gatherings. We learnt more from them about humanity than I have the skill to write of. Təŋ-Yikpɛmdaan, my first friend and mentor and one of nature's gentlemen, was a fount of wisdom. The late Chief of Tongo, Na Naam Bioŋ, was a proud, intelligent, and forthright man whose support stood us in good stead and whose great store of knowledge was freely opened to us. Many others, too numerous to mention, were our faithful friends and zealous helpers.

122 My field-work among the Tallensi was made possible by the grant of a fellowship from the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures. I appreciate the privilege of having held this fellowship and record with gratitude the unfailing interest which the Directors (Dr. J. H.

[1] As Radcliffe-Brown showed in *The Andaman Islands*, and Malinowski in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*.

[2] In 1943, in the course of other duties, I had occasion to spend some time in the Northern Territories. I found that no social changes of significance had taken place among the Tallensi since 1937.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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Oldham and later Professor Sir Reginald Coupland) and the Secretary-General (Sir Hanns Vischer) took in the work of the Institute's fellows. I appreciate, in particular, the freedom they allowed us in carrying out the research entrusted to us and the encouragement they gave us to aim at high scientific standards. I am greatly indebted to Professor D. Westermann, who was one of the Institute's research directors. His great scholarship in West African languages and cultures made his counsel of exceptional value. The success my wife and I were able to achieve in learning Talni owed much to a short course we were fortunate enough to have with him. This, like my preliminary training at the London School of Economics, was made possible by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation.

I chose the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast for my field-work on the advice of the late Captain R. S. Rattray. His name is written in indelible letters in the annals of West African ethnology and I was proud to follow in his footsteps. His pioneer ethnographical survey of the Northern Territories saved me months of labour.

I made Tongo our head-quarters on the advice of Administrative and other Government officers working in the Northern Territories. My wife and I owe a special debt of gratitude to the then Chief Commissioner Mr. W. J. A. (now Sir Andrew) Jones for the keen interest he took in our work and for many helpful arrangements he made to facilitate it. We have also to thank Sir Andrew and Lady Jones for many personal kindnesses. I owe my understanding of the spirit and methods of colonial administration chiefly to Sir Andrew and his officers.

My wife and I also remember gratefully the unfailing kindness and hospitality of Colonel G. H. Gibbs, M.C., Sir Andrew's successor as Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories, who was District Commissioner, Mamprusi, in 1934–7, and of Mrs. Gibbs. A visit to them was a heaven-sent rest from the strenuous routine of field-work. Many discussions with Colonel Gibbs helped to broaden my understanding of the problems of government and social development in the Northern Territories.

Captain J. L. Mothersill, Mr. E. W. Ellison, and Mr. A. F. Kerr, who were in charge of the Zuarungu district at various times during our stay there, put us greatly in their debt by their readiness to help us.

Our nearest European neighbour was Mr. C. W. Lynn, M.B.E., Superintendent of Agriculture at Zuarungu. Mr. Lynn's friendship was a great stand-by to us at all times. He was at that time engaged on his now well-known survey of native agriculture in the Zuarungu district and we had many long talks on this subject. Farming is a subject of supreme interest to the natives; and though it does not come into this book very much, I should have made little progress in the field without some knowledge of Tale agriculture. I received great help from Mr. Lynn on this side of my field-work.

I have, in this study, stuck to my last and dealt with an anthropological problem from an anthropological point of view. But I hope that what I have written will also be of service to Government officers in the Northern territories.